

Pentagon Probing Spy Units

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The Pentagon is investigating the home-front operations of two Army intelligence units and court-martial charges may result, the Defense Department has told a Senate committee.

Because of that inquiry, Pentagon general counsel J. Fred Buzhardt, said it would be inappropriate for three Army intelligence generals to appear before a Senate subcommittee investigating government surveillance of Americans.

Sen. Sam J. Ervin Jr. (D-N.C.) disclosed yesterday he has asked Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird to send the generals to a hearing next Wednesday, anyhow. Ervin said he is confident that no one's rights would suffer as a result of their testimony.

On March 4, Ervin wrote Laird, asking for the appearance next Wednesday of Maj. Gen. Joseph A. McChristian, assistant chief of staff for intelligence; Maj. Gen. William H. Blakefield, former com-

mander of the U.S. Army intelligence command; and Maj. Gen. William P. Yarborough, former assistant chief of staff for intelligence.

The reply came from Buzhardt, offering to have Froehlke return, but saying the generals should not appear.

Buzhardt said formal investigations are in progress "in connection with the activities of two organizational units of the Army."

Any or all of the three generals "could be material witnesses in formal proceedings which might grow out of the current investigations," he said.

"I am sure you will agree that in order to protect the due-process rights of any persons who might be the subject of criminal or administrative charges as a result of the current investigations, it would be inappropriate for Generals McChristian, Blakefield and Yarborough to testify before your subcommittee on this subject at this time."

Buzhardt disclosed no more about the nature of the investigation, who might face charges as a result, or what those charges might be.

Ervin's panel is now inquiring into the record keeping and surveillance activities of other government agencies.

Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare Elliot Richardson is to testify today.
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